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Reference and advisory assistance is available in the Library at the Reference Desk, located in Room 341. Staff members are always on duty to assist users in locating and obtaining materials.

ONLINE RESOURCES

The Library's website offers a wide variety of Reference Services. Some examples of this are *Legal Research*, *Ask a Librarian* (questions via e-mail), *Legislative History*, and *Guide to Tracing a Massachusetts Law*. The following information is available at <http://www.state.ma.us/lib>.



COMPILING A LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

The following resources are available in the library (or online at the library's website: <http://www.state.ma.us/lib>), to aid researchers in doing a legislative history.

Long Form

A detailed guide to the entire legislative process, this document covers the different stages of a bill, from the legislative petition to the public hearings and signing by the governor. The form is accompanied by a listing of official and unofficial sources used when doing a comprehensive legislative history.

Brief Form

(Also see guide to tracing a Massachusetts law on the reverse side) A flow chart is used to explain the steps in finding the history of a particular bill. It lists the sources used in compiling the history, frequency, means of access, and other institutions that maybe helpful.

Glossary of Terms

Finding the history of a particular bill can be a long, complex process with numerous steps and some unfamiliar terms. This glossary provides a brief explanation of the various terms one may encounter while doing this research.

MA State Budget Process

The budget process can be a very difficult and complex portion of legislative research, especially when it involves a budget bill. This flow chart explains the various stages of the budget process. There is also a list of terminology to clarify the process.

Popular Bills Index - 1999-2000 session

In the course of a current session, many bills are proposed, some more

publicized than others. This list, compiled by the Reference Department, may assist the researcher.

Executive Orders, 1981-2001

A chronological list of Executive Orders provides the Order number, the year it was signed, the subject matter, and the legal basis for the Order. The State Library retains copies of all Executive Orders and microfilms these records for permanent retention and preservation.

Researching Massachusetts Legislators

Researchers may need to trace the background of members of the legislature or trace members who have



represented a particular city, town, or area through time. This document serves as a research guide to the sources used in the process.

Senate | House of Representatives Political Complexion

A statistical survey of the political party structure of both the House of Representatives and the Senate from 1867 to the present. Information was provided from the following sources:

Cornelius Dalton's *Leading the Way : A History of the General Court, 1629-1980*, *The Massachusetts Political Almanac*, and the Center for Leadership Studies.

GUIDE TO TRACING A MASSACHUSETTS LAW

Legislative research is difficult as well as time-consuming. There are no legislative histories already compiled here in the Commonwealth, as is sometimes the case with federal legislative history. Library staff are here to help you locate the materials you will need to compile a history. Many of the sources are located in the reference area (Room 341, State House), on the 4th floor Periodicals area, or in the Library's Special Collections Department in Room 55, State House. Other sources such as original papers are located in the State Archives at Columbia Point.



The House and Senate proceedings tapes add a new dimension in legislative research. Patrons can locate the appropriate tape by using the official journals available at the third-floor Reading Room (Room 341). Information can also be found by using the State House News

Service debate coverage available in the reference area.

Flow charts are available at the Library's Reference Desk and on the Library's website.



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341 State House
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